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# Garrison Criticized Anew as Candidates Speak Out

## Four on Program Held by Alliance

District Attorney Jim Garrison was again the focal point of sharp criticism as four of the five candidates for the DA's office appeared on the same program here Thursday night, just as he was several days ago at a similar session.

Candidate William P. Schuler, who also was scheduled to appear, sent his regrets by telegram to the sponsoring organization, The Alliance for Good Government, explaining that he was engaged in a court case in Baton Rouge.

The meeting, fifth in an Alliance-sponsored series entitled "Know Your Candidate," was held at the Construction and General Laborers Union Hall, 400 Soniat St.

### CONNICK FIRST

First to the speakers stand, Harry Connick, a former U.S. attorney, spared no barbs in his almost unrelenting attack on Garrison and his office.

Calling recent controversies that have clouded the DA's office a "stinking mess," Connick accused Garrison of lacking intelligence because, he said, the DA denies the fact that organized crime exists in New Orleans, yet appoints members of his staff to investigate its reported existance.

Connick also blasted Garrison, as did other speakers, for participating in what he called "one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in history," the Clay Shaw case, as well as blaming him for the recent bail bond controversy where almost $1 million in bail bond forfeits is owed Orleans Parish.

### ABILITY PRAISED

Garrison, who seemed invulnerable to the other candidates' scathing remarks about him as he listened, usually expressionless, and puffed on a pipe, was next behind the podium.

While complimentary of Connick's ability as an attorney and saying that he would probably be a good district attorney, Garrison said, "I don't think anyone else is going to give you a better office (than Garrison has)."

Calling the district attorney's office one of his "greatest interests in life." Garrison termed "false" accusations that he was hardly ever at his office and said that because the crime rate is spiraling does not mean that it is caused by any negligence on his or his staff's part.

"In cities where I'm not district attorney it's spiraling," he remarked.

Ross T. Scaccia was third to speak, promising never to enter into cases such as the Shaw case, where he contended that Garrison had little evidence.

He also lambasted the current DA's office, where he said assistants have no authority to make a decision and "no communications with their leader."

Scaccia said that, if elected, he would change the policy of allowing defendants to plead guilty to reduced charges. He said that they would be tried on original charges and unless he believed the person guilty of the charge, he would not prosecute.

### WARD IS HEARD

Last to address the meeting was former first assistant DA Charles R. Ward, who said that "every major category of crime has increased" and that "prospects for 1969 were worse."

Ward, who also took his turn to fire at Garrison, said that he would do all in his power to advance programs of rehabilitation for both convicted criminals and narcotic addicts and to bring about better correctional institutions.

"If elected I will lead the fight for reform and change," he said.

In question and answer period, Ward also implied that Garrison could have been involved in the Louisiana Loan and Thrift establishment or operation.

Garrison firmly denied this, and answering a question put to him by Connick, said that he never owned any LL&T stock. He said that his only connection with anybody involved was an invitation to come into the business at its beginning, "for reasons that are still obscure." He said that he flatly rejected the offer.